
Chargers set for rematch with UAM in Region Final

Contributed by Antoine Bell
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Photo by Chuck Edgeworth

The No. 2 seeded UAH Chargers rallied late to beat Arkansas-Monticello and earn a spot in the South Region finals. The 12th-ranked Chargers improved to 41-10, while No. 23 UAM fell to 51-11. The Cotton Blossoms battled their way through the losers bracket to earn a rematch with the Chargers in the Regional final on Sunday afternoon.

At stake, a spot in the Super Regionals next weekend. A win by UAH, coupled with a loss by Valdosta State, who is hosting the other half of the South Region tournament, will bring the Super Regional back to Huntsville for the second year in a row. However, if both VSU and UAH win out, the Super Regional will be played in Valdosta since the Blazers are the top seed in the Region. VSU will have to win twice against Palm Beach Atlantic on Sunday afternoon. Palm Beach Atlantic edged the Blazers 3-1 on Saturday.

UAM used a two-out rally in the second inning to get on the board first. After the first two batters were retired quickly, Jennifer Hickman, Faith Lund and Randa Perry reached on consecutive singles. Perry's base-hit to left field sent Hickman home with the first run of the day.

The lead didn't last long for the Cotton Blossoms as UAH pitcher Whitney Hawkins hit a solo homer in the bottom of the third inning to tie the game at 1-1.

In the sixth inning, UAM struck again with two outs. Hickman singled and rightfielder Sarah Hayslip raced home with the go-ahead run from second base, giving UAM a 2-1 lead.

Once again the UAM's lead was short-lived as UAH posted three runs in the bottom of the inning. First baseman Beth Lawson gave the Chargers the lead with a two-run double. Whitney Schrimsher added an RBI single to give UAH a 4-2 lead.

Hawkins and the UAH defense closed the door in the seventh to preserve the win and propel UAH into the finals.

Hawkins (20-4) scattered nine hits and allowed two runs. She also had seven strikeouts.

Kayla Jackson (28-6) took the loss for the Cotton Blossoms. She pitched six innings, allowed four runs on seven hits, struck out three and walked three.